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HOW STRONG IS TITO?

by Constantin Fotitch

The conflict between Tito and the Cominform continues to focus attention on Yugoslavia as a highly inflammable danger point in the cold war. Thus an analysis of Tito's strength becomes vital for Americans.

From its initial stage, when the conflict was on the Party level, it has evolved into an unbridgeable conflict between two governments, where the possibility of armed intervention is not to be discounted. Originally the Kremlin believed that the peremptory ukase of the Cominform, accompanied by a heavy barrage of propaganda, would suffice to bring Tito under Communist discipline. Later, they applied against Yugoslavia a severe economic blockade, supported by the whole Eastern bloc. The Moscow leadership also attempted to get rid of their wayward pupil by fomenting internal revolt.

Those methods failed. Tito received economic support from Western countries. And his secret police -- whose chiefs have been trained in the NKVD schools -- successfully thwarted several attempts at rebellion. Of these the most important was staged by Tito's former Chief of Staff, General Arso Jovanovich, probably in conspiracy with Vishinsky and Ana Pauker, during the Danube Conference held in Belgrade in July, 1948.

But those failures certainly have not weakened Soviet determination to settle the score with Tito. For the Kremlin he is not a problem of secondary importance, which may be ignored. The defiant attitude of the Yugoslav Dictator is both a heavy blow to Soviet prestige in Eastern Europe and a serious obstacle to plans for further penetration in the Western European and Mediterranean areas.

Last summer Tito turned actively against the Greek rebel leader Zachariades. The motive behind this desertion was apparently one of self-defense, in order to stop the incursion of rebel bands into Yugoslav Macedonia. Nevertheless, it forced the Soviets to abandon, for the time being, their stubborn and protracted effort to bring Greece into the fold of "People's Democracies". This Greek episode, perhaps more than any other single event, induced Moscow to denounce Tito angrily, in an official statement, as "an enemy of the Soviet and an agent of foreign imperialist circles".

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II

The Soviets are not prone to forgive their enemies, even less so when they are Communist rebels originally installed in power by the efforts of the Kremlin. Revenge may be slow -- it took more than ten years to "get" Trotsky in faraway Mexico -- but it is usually sure.

One indication is the Cominform resolution of November 29, 1949, that "the struggle against Tito's clique of spies and assassins is the international duty of all Communist and Workers Parties". Even more ominous in Molotov's statement in his article in Pravda of December 21, 1949, on the occasion of Stalin's birthday: "The time is not far off when the treacherous Tito gang will be overcome by the shameful fate of dishonest hirelings of imperialist reaction."

Of course the most convenient way for Moscow to rid itself of the Tito embarrassment would be by his physical liquidation. But if this fails an alternative is to foment internal rebellion, accompanied by incursion from neighboring countries of armed bands of Yugoslav Cominform-Communists, and other "international brigades".

Those bands would enjoy full Russian support, while the Cominform would use all the resources of its propaganda to explain that such action answers appeals for help from the "toiling masses" of Yugoslavia, to get rid of their oppressor and bring Yugoslavia back into the happy family of Socialist countries.

The Soviets would spare no effort to justify their action as being in the interest of "peace-loving democracies" and in conformity with their widely publicized policy for the preservation of world peace.

The possibilities of Soviet military intervention to bring to an end the conflict with Tito are not ignored in this country. President Truman undoubtedly had this possibility in mind when on December 22, 1949, he authorized publicity for the following statement by Mr. George V. Allen, newly-appointed Ambassador to Belgrade:

> "As regards Yugoslavia, we are just as opposed to aggression against that country as any other country and just as favorable to the retention of Yugoslav sovereignty."

Furthermore, World Bank loans to Yugoslavia are under consideration. And the National Defense Council is reported as having decided to extend to Tito a "limited assistance", in order to bolster his determination to resist such an aggression and increase his military potential.

III

To what extent will "limited assistance" and advance condemnation of "aggression" influence the Soviet to abandon the idea of direct intervention, and how competent is Tito to offer effective resistance?

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The Kremlin would certainly hesitate to embark on military intervention which might lead to a general conflict with Western countries and especially with the United States. But if satisfied that "assistance" would be short of war, and limited only to sending arms and other war supplies, their plans probably would not be seriously affected.

As for Tito's ability to resist, this would depend greatly upon the extent to which such aggression would develop. If Soviet military intervention provoked a general conflict, the resistance of Yugoslavia would be extremely stubborn and very effective. The people would fight with determination, believing that with the victory of the Western bloc, dictatorship of any kind, Cominformist or Titoist, must come to an end. They would be prepared to make heavy sacrifices with the conviction that after defeat of the Soviets they would settle their scores with Tito and eventually regain their lost freedom and liberties.

On the other hand, if Soviet intervention against Tito should remain a localized conflict, the resistance would be far less effective and would not present any serious difficulties for the Russians. Under these circumstances the Yugoslav people would feel that they were called upon to defend Tito's personal regime, and to maintain its ruthless dictatorship. No matter how strong their feelings against the Soviets, Yugoslav resentment against Tito has not been eliminated by his conflict with the Cominform.

The people of Yugoslavia cannot forget the brutal methods which Tito used to impose and keep himself in power. Liquidation of thousands by the secret police, loss of freedom, concentration camps, forced labor, collectivization of the land and loot of private property, would not be forgotten, even in the face of Soviet intervention. Tito, Kardelj, Djilas, Piyade, Bebler, and other lesser stars of the regime are far from having the stature of national leaders fighting for the independence of the country. Nor can the people of Yugoslavia forget that the official policy of the regime, before the split with the Cominform, was to make Yugoslavia one of the Republics of the Soviet Union, as Kardelj stated to the Soviet Ambassador in Belgrade on June 5, 1945.

It would be hard for Tito and his regime to convince the people of Yugoslavia that in fighting the Soviets unaided they would not be fighting to defend a hated dictatorship.

IV

The army -- except the special units KNOJS and "proletarian brigades" -- reflects the general feeling of the people, which in overwhelming majority remains anti-Communist, as before the conflict with

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the Cominform. Moreover, the army would be further weakened by those Communist elements which could be expected to remain faithful to Moscow. For them, Soviet intervention would be the opportunity they need to manifest their hostility to Tito.

The fighting potential of the army is also affected by the quality of its armament. Before the conflict with the Cominform, the armament of the Yugoslav Army was principally supplied by the Soviet Union in pursuance of the policy of unifying the military strength of the Soviet bloc. Armored and mechanized equipment and heavy armaments are either of Russian make or come from the Skoda factories in Czechoslovakia. The Yugoslav Army also depends upon these for ammunition and spare parts, as the domestic armament industry is negligible. Yugoslav aviation is equipped with obsolete Russian airplanes and could hardly oppose any resistance to a modern air force. Only some light arms are of American or British origin, sent to Tito during the war through lend-lease.

In order to make the Yugoslav Army effective its whole equipment would have to be overhauled, requiring a considerable effort, far beyond that indicated by the phrase "limited assistance". Guerrilla resistance would also be affected by the unfriendly feelings of the majority toward Tito, thus making any prolonged struggle problematical.

All in all, Tito's military potential has been greatly overrated. Even if the country were united behind him, and his army well equipped and supplied, it would not be a serious obstacle for the Soviets in the event of a localized conflict. The country being divided, its defenses inadequate, the value of Tito's regime as a military factor is subject to heavy discount.

The Soviets are well aware of all this. They are fearful about engaging in direct intervention against Tito because they are anxious to avoid any action which might lead to a general conflict. But it could be otherwise, should the Kremlin appraise the situation as one in which the conflict would remain localized, with Tito unable to expect more than a limited assistance from the West. Then Molotov's warning that "the time is not far off . . ." could be realized, by fateful action in the not distant future.

Constantin Fotitch, author of The War We Lost, was the Yugoslav Ambassador to the United States from 1935 to 1946.

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events Vol. VII, No. 7

By Frank C. Hanighen February 15, 1950

BIPARTISANISM: Mr. Winston Churchill not only stirred the British election campaign to real life by his speech in Edinburgh on February 14; he also blazed a trail for Republicans in the United States to follow. Churchill's call for a high level conference with Stalin may or may not be a sound proposal; may be just "campaign oratory". But, it did break the British "bipartisan" foreign policy arrangement. The Conservative Party leaders have been under fire in their own party on the score of "me-tooism". On news of the speech, many Republicans in Congress who oppose bipartisanism found new reason to fight for an independent approach to our foreign problems; and reason to regret that they had not supported such a line in their recent, mealy-mouthed statement of party policy.

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ADA: The GOP accusation of "Socialism" may or may not prove effective in warning voters against the Democratic Party. It is quite possible that people listen just as incredulously to such attacks as they have to many other well-justified admonitions. But, it was very noticeable how promptly and energetically Senator Humphreys (D. Minn.) reacted to the charge that he was keeping company with Socialists. The episode took place on the floor of the Senate on February 7, when Capehart of Indiana pinned the label on the organization known as Americans for Democratic Action. Senator Humphreys is the chairman of that group. When Capehart proposed to read into the record a document entitled "History of the PCA, ADA and Henry Wallace", Humphreys reserved the "right to object", a rather unusual step; for "reading into the record" is a common procedure protected by Senatorial courtesy. After a brief colloquy with Capehart, Humphreys finally did not object and the Senator from Indiana read into the record a piece, which makes the point, among others, that the ADA was formed as a "non-Communist haven for the more respectable American liberals who could find no stomach for the Red-tainted PCA". To Capehart, these "respectable liberals" are Socialists either consciously or unconsciously.

The document is instructive and may be read on pp. 1636-40 of the Record. Capehart's accompanying speech was more pertinacious than subtle. The Indianian hammered away on (1) an editorial in the ADA World, the house organ, which rooted for a victory by the Labor Party in the British election; and (2) the fact that the Labor Party is avowedly Socialist, and Attlee is avowedly out to socialize Britain. There seems little to quarrel with in these assertions. But Senator Humphreys replied with vigor and color. He, of course, emphasized that his organization condemned "all forms of totalitarianism" including Communism, but the character of his speech was defensive. Capehart came back with more of his, and rather effectively. He wound up with, "We are getting Socialism in America through the back door. Let us not say that 'It can't happen here'. We have the example of Senators and Representatives and Governors who advocate the re-election of Socialism in England."

What the Indiana Senator referred to was a long list of ADA leaders, including 6 Senators and 17 Representatives. The list, proudly read by Humphreys, also had such names as Murray D. Lincoln, William Green, Walter P. Reuther, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, former Senator Wagner, Governor Chester Bowles, Secretary of the Interior Chapman, Governor Paul A. Dever, Elmer Davis, Wilson Wyatt, among many others. The fact is that observers in Washington are increasingly impressed by the ADA's array of strength. And the speech of Capehart is believed to be but the first of a series of attacks in Congress on the American counterpart of the British Fabians.

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POMP AND CEREMONY: If some future Gibbon should survive the atomic age and wish to describe the pomp of the American imperium in Washington, he might study our random observations on a dinner we attended recently. It was the annual banquet of the Association of Radio Correspondents and as usual the President of the United States attended. The grand banquet and ballroom of a very modern hotel was filled to capacity with radio correspondents and their guests. At a raised table, running the whole length of the room, sat the President and Vice President, Cabinet members, leaders of the Senate and House, Supreme Court Justices, admirals, generals, executives of the radio industry, etc. On a stage opposite, Bob Hope presided over a vaudeville show, voted by common agreement the best in many years.

Technical apparatus also presided. Great television lamps (for part of the show was televised) burned relentlessly and enormous loops, coils and streamers of heavily insulated wires draped over the stage and ran almost everywhere. Kleig lights were poised at intervals along the walls and even right over the rostrum, where the President's chair was located. Hundreds of diners sat packed at tables on the floor, while waiters struggled about in the narrow intervening spaces between the dinner-jacketed crowd. There were microphones everywhere -- on the stage, on the rostrum, etc; and titanic voices dinned announcements. A band struck up the strains of "Hail to the Chief", and everyone looked for the arrival of the President. But he passed from the entrance door behind the head table, and as all the celebrities there stood up, Mr. Truman was unseen by anyone on the floor, until he reached his seat.

Bob Hope's crazy humor seemed to epitomize the proceedings, the noise, the confusion of lights and sounds. "Three scrambled eggs on top of my head, and a rasher of bacon on each ear." He kept repeating the device weaving it into his fantasia. H. V. Kaltenborn paid tribute to Caesar by repeating his famous performance of Election night, November 2, 1948, to the delight of all and Caesar. The president of the correspondents' association presented a table, made from wood taken from the White House (now under reconstruction) to President Truman -- a table to support a radio or television set, it was announced. This presentation involved a shuffle; as pulling and hauling went on, Mr. Truman who had risen, disappeared from sight in the midst of the pullers and haulers. When he became visible again, he said he'd take the gift to Blair House temporarily, later to transfer it to the White House, "if I ever get back there".

One can hardly say that the President's figure harmonized with two elongated sculptural human figures in bas-relief which ran up the wall behind him. On that wall, part way up, was a pedestal from which peered a kleig light, operated by one of Caesar's citizens. When the President arose to speak, the mechanic lit a cigarette and sat down to listen, his legs hanging, as it seemed from our table, right above the President's head. We don't remember all Mr. Truman said, but we do recall him reminding the correspondents that, only in this democracy, can correspondents interrogate the "Chief of State" freely at press conferences. The correspondents seemed bored by this reminder, but many later remarked on Mr. Truman's disarming simplicity. After the speech, "Hail to the Chief" rang again and the President disappeared behind the backs of those at the main table. The ceremony was over.

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AMERICAN BUSINESS: We ran across the current number of the Partisan Review (January, 1950) with an article by James Burnham. (The article was excerpted from the book by Mr. Burnham reviewed in this issue by Mr. Lalley.) While Burnham -- in our opinion -- is much too harsh on the American businessman on the score of "greed", brushes off too easily the results of the income tax, and gives the impression that

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all American businessmen are reprehensible, he has some things to say about the political lack of sense of this type that are worth quoting. "Businessmen are ignorant", he says, "abysmally ignorant about what Communism is, what Communists are. Of course, the businessmen are, almost all of them, in their own minds the staunchest of 'anti-Communists'. But because they do not understand Communism (and because they are greedy and short-sighted), they act frequently in ways that help Communism. They really cannot believe that the Communists mean what they say -- just as they could not bring themselves to believe Hitler. They do not believe that the Communists are serious when they declare that they are going to conquer the world. . . ."

Burnham goes on to pillory the businessman on a score which many of those in the publication world know is all too well founded. He says, "Some among their great publishing houses have distributed millions of copies of propagandized books by Communists and their fellow travellers. In the case of China particularly, these books are weighty among the causes of the disaster that has taken place. With all the devotion in the world to free speech, could they not at least leave it to the Communists to publish their own, instead of using the resources and ability of business to smear the country with this mental poison? In their million-copied magazines, they print articles skillfully advancing the Communist line. . . ." Burnham goes on, "How many Communists and fellow travellers, how many Communist causes, have drunk deep of the many-millioned streams which Marshall Field has poured into journalistic gutters! Funds from the great foundations are dispensed to Communist-line writers, artists, teachers. The endowments of great universities, supervised by businessmen trustees, maintain in the comfort to which they are accustomed notorious apologists for Communist causes. How many pamphlets, books, speeches and reports pleasing to the Kremlin have appeared under the benign sanction of the Foreign Policy Association or the Institute of Pacific Relations, both recipients of such generous support from the suicidal statesmen of the business community!" The article is entitled, "The Suicidal Mania of American Business".

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FARMER ENTERPRISE: In Country Almanac, edited by A. B. Genung in Freeville, New York, there's a good description of how farmers get their pork nowadays. Only slightly nostalgic for the good old days of butchering "squealing shoats" and "stringing 'em up" down on the farm, Mr. Genung wonders at the new "age of specialization", and describes: "We didn't feed any pigs this year. When the time came to buy pork last month, we made a trip to the county seat and sauntered into this locker plant that they call Mother Zero. A magnificent thing dreamed up by Ed. Babcock and run by a world-famous farmer co-operative known merely by three cryptic initials, 'G.L.F.' They'll come and get your shoats and deliver you back smoked ham and pork chops.

"There's the price list on the wall . . . At 29¢ a pound you can buy half a hog, whole hog, or a dozen, we suppose. For 6¢ a pound extra they will process it. Which means doing everything up to the frying stage. They cut it up, trim the loins, smoke the hams, shoulders and bacon, slice the bacon, cut and wrap the chops in pound packages, make and season the sausage, wrap everything up in small packages, freeze it, and even store the whole business if you don't happen to want to lug it home at the moment. A genial white-robed clerk consults a card index and tells you what weights they have on hand. You select a pig of about 160 pounds, write a check, and walk out with as much pork as you want to carry, leaving the rest stored. Thus are the pigs raised, fattened, butchered, cut up, smoked, cured, seasoned, packaged, frozen, put into your hand as pork ready for the stove -- all by a stroke of your pen. About as cheap as you could raise 'em, too. All by the genius of American farmer enterprise -- free enterprise."

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Book Events

The Coming Defeat of Communism, by James Burnham. New York: The John Day Company, Inc. $3.50. Reviewed by J. M. Lalley.

Mr. Burnham's thesis, as well as it can be put into a few words, is that Communism will be defeated when the chief anti-Communist power, meaning of course the United States, abandons its policy of "containment" and assumes the offensive. But this cannot occur until it is recognized by both the politicians and the people that a Third World War is not to be avoided, for the reason that it is already raging everywhere in the world. For nowadays, says Mr. Burnham, war and politics are identical terms; the kind of war that involves vast armies and the wholesale expenditure of munitions, and the kind of war that is called peace, represent merely different tactical operations. Unfortunately, this is not yet understood by either our civil or our military leaders; indeed their habit of thinking of war in archaic Nineteenth Century terms -- armaments, logistics, general staff planning, frontiers, invasions, formal declarations, and so on -- is, it appears, our chief disadvantage in the conflict with the Communists and explains all their otherwise inexplicable victories. As long as the Communists can advance their purpose, which is nothing less than the monopoly of world power, without resorting to formal and open warfare, they will continue to do so until their adversary is so weakened as to place the issue of an open war beyond any possible doubt.

The true character of modern war, Mr. Burnham assures us, is to be discovered not from the memoirs of statesmen and generals but from the history of the various "Resistance" movements. Keeping in mind the equation of war and politics, the most important operations may be seen to be those carried on against an enemy from within his own lines, although these operations of course must be co-ordinated with pressures from without. Just how much the various European "Resistance" movements actually contributed to the military defeat of the Nazis is apparently still a matter of some dispute. There is, however, no doubt about their part in the new configurations of power resulting from that defeat. The primary purpose of such movements is not "liberation"; it is to provide an apparatus for the seizure of power when opportunity offers. Thus the Communist Party in non-Communist countries must be envisaged as a vast and ever-active guerrilla organization, implementing by espionage, sabotage, propaganda and intimidation the war plans of the Kremlin. When this is understood, Mr. Burnham observes, the folly of permitting the Communist Party to claim the rights and freedoms accorded to other political parties becomes clear. The great advantage possessed by the Communists, whether Russian or native, arises from their awareness that a state of war exists, and has in fact existed since the Third International declared it against the world.

Our salvation depends, therefore, upon wresting the initiative from the Communists. Mr. Burnham sees no moral objection to a swift, unannounced and paralyzing aerial atomic attack upon Russia, but he dismisses the notion as inexpedient and unnecessary. He believes that once the West has seized the diplomatic and propaganda offensive, all the cracks and fissures of the Communist edifice of power will become suddenly apparent, and its collapse may follow more readily than anyone now dares to predict. For the elements of a vast counter-Resistance movement already exist within Communist territory, needing only encouragement and the prospect of success to become active and powerful. Even in the Party itself there are signs of mounting psychological tensions among those comrades who no longer find themselves able to reconcile theory and reality; and the crumbling of the monolithic discipline, upon which Communist success must depend, is evidenced in the rise and contagious influence of Titoism. In short, all that is needed for the destruction of world Communism is the realization of the purpose and the will to achieve it.

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By Bertrand de Jouvenel February 15, 1950

STALINIAN COUNTER-OFFENSIVE IN FRANCE: Things have started moving in France, jolting an established complacency. "Uncle Joe looks East" was the comforting belief which obtained. It was felt that, while Moscow was engulfing in the Soviet Empire the greatest of continents, the Western European area would be left to organize itself and there were many skeptics who argued that the Soviets need not interfere, that inherent difficulties were enough to preclude any actual crystallization of Western Europe.

It seems that Stalin does not range himself with these skeptics, that he regards the building-up of Western Europe as something which has started to happen, and which must not be allowed to proceed. For he has evidently ordered a great offensive against France, the nucleus of Western Europe. While this country is being represented, in the great spy trial at Stettin, as nursing aggressive plans towards Poland and Russia (which would be funny were not Stalinian jokes rife with sinister consequences), France in the meantime is being driven rapidly towards internal disorder. Indeed it is frightening to have thus proved the power of the Soviets to reverse in a few weeks a heretofore favorable internal situation.

What is the purpose of the Stalinian offensive in France? Possibly Stalin wishes to reproduce the Chinese pattern. It was a tremendous and decisive success to discourage American support of Nationalist China. If France now could be made to seem unreliable, another area of quicksand, then again American support might be removed, and again the road would be open for Communist victory.

Moscow strategists regard American opinion as too wide awake and think too highly of American determination to hope that the U.S. may desert its allies out of blindness or laxity. If American deficiencies are not to be counted upon, then why not turn American virtues to Moscow's advantage? The Americans, it is argued, will not desert France on the suggestion of "appeasers"; but sensible practical men shall themselves suggest the giving up of Western aid if it seems wasted, if the country can be made to appear unreliable.

Thus it becomes consonant with the Communist purpose to stress French weaknesses. The Communists want American opinion to think of France as riddled with Communists, just like the Germans in 1940 wanted the French to think of themselves as interspersed with fifth columnists. The presence of a Joliot-Curie as the head of our atomic research is valuable to them because it naturally arouses doubts in the U.S. The sensational story about General Revers, based upon only the slightest foundation as far as one can ascertain, was jam to the Communists.

Unfortunately Stalinian action can do far more than give France the appearance of weakness and disorder: it is proving a powerful disruptive.

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THE NUTCRACKER: The nutcracker is a simple device of Machiavellianism. You get whoever you want to crack solidly committed to some achievement which is going to turn out much harder than expected. The difficulty to be coped with is the first handle of the nutcracker. Meanwhile you cause a resistance to arise against such action as the commitment calls for: the second handle of the nutcracker.

France's difficulty in Indo-China is one instance of the nutcracker process. Stalin might have recognized Ho Chi Minh's Viet Minh as the legal sovereign of Indo-China at any time since 1945 and notably in 1946 when the French Government of the day passed agreements with him, broken by the massacre of French nationals in

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December, 1946. But he waited till France had committed itself to the reinstatement of Bao Daï to come out with recognition of Ho Chi Minh in the very moment when the French Parliament came to ratify the agreements with Bao Daï. This was so timed as to constitute a challenge. In the meantime the French Communists and especially the Communist-dominated CGT, acting on instructions issued through the Cominform in November, had gradually stimulated "direct action" of the workers against production for or traffic with Indo-China. Thus France found herself called upon to increase her efforts in Indo-China while simultaneously paralyzing friction was set up.

This nutcracker is a very effective one. War in Indo-China is far from popular, and how could it be popular? French soldiers sent over there are being subjected to the most frightful deaths which human imagination can devise. On the other hand France pursues no positive end, seeks only to hold back something which can by extreme courtesy be called Communism. On the other hand action against workers who refuse to load trains or ships is not easy to take; there being nothing more difficult, or more inacceptable, than to make men do what they will not.

Such passive sabotage has the immense advantage for Moscow of creating a habit which can be used against the handling of war material sent under the American Military Assistance Program. There might have been some repugnance on the part of the workers to interfere with the arming of France and the setting up of national defense. But the impulsion has been given on the Indo-China issue. Further the purpose of the trials in Poland is to establish in workers' minds the idea that armaments from the States are meant for an aggressive war.

An old theme is now taken up with French workers and, very successfully, with a number of French intellectuals: the war we are preparing for is not "our war", it is the American war. An old theme, for it was used in the German interest in 1939 and 1940: then it was "not our war, but the war of the English".

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A TOTAL CHANGE OF ATMOSPHERE: It is quite remarkable how rapidly the climate of France has changed. Less than six months ago everyone was optimistic and good-humored. Prosperity was here, talk of war was "out of date", political normalcy had been restored, the Communists were forgotten and General de Gaulle's following was rapidly dropping away. Indeed there was good reason for optimism: France had achieved a remarkable recovery.

Now, and especially in the last few days, nervousness prevails again; all the more striking in that there is no fundamental change. The main difference is in the absence of any political authority. The public feels that anything might happen and there would be no reaction from the authorities entrusted with the function of keeping the peace. Small things such as the impish turning off of the gas supply, or suspension of the bus services, wear down the tempers, as from one hour to another it is not known what will work and what won't. On the whole interruptions are very few: but exasperating because unpredictable.

In a fortnight de Gaulle's credit has increased by leaps and bounds: a sensational comeback, due entirely to the weakness of the Government.

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PUBLIC OPINION IS NOT REPRESENTED: Four years ago France was governed by a coalition of the Communists, the Socialists and the MRP's (Christian Democrats). In 1947, M. Ramadier eased the Communists out of the Government, now the Socialists have left it. Thus the MRP's remain alone of the original tripartite coalition. They are bolstered up by the Radicals (Conservative Liberals). If they do not obtain the support of Socialist votes in Parliament, they must obtain the Conservative votes (the so-called Independents) and they may need also the Gaullist votes. Thus we have come round to a government of the Center and the Right. Such a government however goes against the grain of the Christian Democrat leaders who cannot recon-

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cile themselves to the divorce with the Socialists and have not lost a fundamental yearning for amity with the Communists.

To them Socialists and Communists are comrades with whom the Fourth Republic was founded. The Radicals and Independents are regrettable ghosts of a former and detestable regime. This is quite fundamental. It alone explains that only a few weeks ago the MRP Prime Minister threw the weight of his office in the interests of the Communists during a discussion of the law on collective bargaining, a law which was turned out by the House so worded that it drives the workers practically into the fold of the Communist-dominated CGT.

The past is the key to the present. What is called in France Tripartisme is a reality sealed by sentiments and interests and which binds the governing party of today, the Christian Democrats, to their Socialist and Communist friends by links which survive under conditions of political antagonism. Thus there cannot exist in the present legislature any coherent government of a Conservative Liberal tinge. And its impossibility increases day by day the probability of Gaullism.

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A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC: In order to understand the power exerted by the Communist Party even now when it is officially damned, it is necessary to go back to the inception of the Fourth Republic, to which Communism stood godfather.

Communism in France had been discredited by Moscow's alliance with Hitler from August, 1939, to July, 1941. Its credit was restored by General de Gaulle when he invited Communist co-operation in the Resistance organizations. As old-timers in clandestine action the Communists were rapidly looked up to by their associates, as they deserved to be for their efficiency and courage. But while clandestine action was proceeding, simultaneously clandestine councils were laying the ground for the political future. The non-Communists thought it would be fine to merge their various movements, the Communists saw fit to multiply organizations which came to be independently represented on the National Council of the Resistance, and at various layers. Multiple representation of Communism gave it a large measure of control over the organizations where they wielded practical veto powers against such men as seemed to them potentially dangerous.

General de Gaulle was committed to the restoration of the Republic and consequent reinstatement of its personnel. This suited neither the Communists nor the younger men who filled the clandestine organizations: they agreed with Vichy that the Third Republic was responsible for the defeat, and both an idealist desire for better things and a natural ambition disposed them ill towards the return of the previous teams. Socialists were willing to build a new Republic more "advanced" than the former. But foremost among those who demanded novelty were the small group of Christian Democrats: they had for many years advocated a "Fourth Republic" to replace the materialist Third. It suited the Communists to push them forward.

Conscious that all the French could not be collected behind Marxist colors, the Communists thought it a master stroke to choose, as the leaders offered to the more Conservative fraction of the French public, men who were politically inexperienced, had a bent towards a form of collectivism, would not offer a vigorous opposition to collectivization and could never, as having a Catholic coloration, rally around them the French Center.

So while Conservatism and Liberalism had together formed a majority of the French Parliament (under a galaxy of names) Communist stage management at the Liberation left these tendencies unrepresented: France was offered the choice of Communism, Socialism or Christian Democracy. In the enormous upheaval which then occurred the tripartite pattern was adhered to everywhere: the newspapers, which were all taken over, were shared between the three groups, and the political tribu-

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nals formed at all levels to pass judgment on activities during the Occupation were drawn up on the tripartite pattern.

In effect a three-headed oligarchy was constituted: it is plain that thereby a profund solidarity was established between the three groups which practically shared a monopoly of representation and even of expression.

It follows therefrom that the leaders of the Christian Democrats cannot wholeheartedly fight their political enemies of today nor adopt with enthusiasm their present associates. To unite them with their overt enemies there is the great matter of newspaper properties for instance. The Radicals urge them to return newspaper properties, presently in the hands of Communists, to their rightful owners, who happen to be inclined to Radicalism. Yes, but this calls into question the very principle of the bold strokes agreed upon at the time of the Liberation. And so forth.

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THE SHADOW OF WEIMAR: I clearly remember the day, in the summer of 1930, when my mind was made up that the Weimar Republic had not long to live. The fate of the Fourth Republic is not thus sealed but there is little doubt that Government and Parliament have fallen into a degree of disrepute which I never found in the worst days of the Third Republic. A general election is urgently called for, which should re-establish contact between representatives and the mood of the country.

The difficulty about the election is twofold. First, Parliament does not want to be dissolved; second, there is no agreement on an electoral law. The Radicals believe that the pre-war mode of election should be restored, the single-member constituency with two successive ballots, election by an absolute majority in the first ballot or a relative majority in the second ballot: this would eliminate all but a few of the Communists as they have an absolute majority almost nowhere and would benefit from no alliances. The Gaullists demand the election by party tickets bearing a list of names for a list of seats as it is practiced today but not with proportional representation: the strongest list takes all the seats if it obtains an absolute majority on the first vote or a relative on the second. Unfortunately for such reforms, the majority of members hold their seats by virtue of the present system and are apt to prefer it. The retention of the present system, it is generally agreed, would make it impossible to form any majority which did not include either the Communists or the Gaullists, as each of these groups is expected to collect at least 25 per cent of the votes.

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COCA-COLA gives a headache to French politicians. The Coca-Cola company proposes to manufacture its product in France; a welcome investment. But it is feared that the French worker who pops into the bistro for his customary glass of wine may be induced to ask instead for a "coke". This fear is being aroused among the wine-growers, who constitute a large section of the French farmers. Not only to them but to the nation at large it is represented that a French fundamental interest is to be hurt, and a French tradition sacrificed. Many are irritated at the thought that an American custom is to be forced upon the French by sheer weight of publicity. In political circles it is feared that the Communists who have seized upon this theme will make great capital out of it. It seems that some American official move has been made to hasten the French decision on this point, which is not astonishing since it is agreed that American investments in France are a factor in Marshall Plan recovery. But this move has provided ammunition to the Communists who exclaim: "Here is the actual proof that the Marshall Plan is, as we have always claimed, the bulldozer breaking ground for private capitalist interests." And they have found a slogan: "France is to be coca-colonized."

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